

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Dietitian/Nutritionist

Class Code: 50332

A. Purpose:

Provides counseling, technical assistance, and diet planning services to ensure the dietary and nutritional needs of clients are met.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

Dietitian/Nutritionist performs duties as a registered dietitian or licensed nutritionist in establishing and modifying diets for clients diagnosed as having diabetes, metabolic disorders, food and drug interactions, or other conditions complicated by diet.

Nutrition Educator administers the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Supplemental Food Program in an assigned region by providing technical assistance and nutrition education materials to participants.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions which may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Provides counseling services to clients who demonstrate nutritional needs due to complicated nutritional conditions or to control medical conditions.
 - a. Interviews clients referred by physicians.
 - b. Discusses diet and eating habits and recommends changes.
 - c. Requests a diet recall from clients.
 - i. Reviews eating patterns.
 - ii. Assesses growth patterns.
 - d. Analyzes diets for percentages of fats, carbohydrates, and other nutrients consumed.
 - e. Assess nutritional need for clients.
 - i. Evaluates diet orders, lab values, food allergies, and medications for nutrient and drug interactions.
 - ii. Discusses food likes and dislikes, eating habits, and the need for self-help.
 - f. Plans and develops new diets and meal plans and motivates clients to follow the new diet.
2. Monitors and modifies client care plans to ensure appropriate client services are delivered.
 - a. Adjusts diets for clients experiencing allergic or medical reactions to certain foods or nutrients.
 - b. Reviews and modifies recipes and verifies the ingredients of products for clients.
 - c. Reviews and approves special formula needs of clients.
3. Provides health professionals with technical expertise and is available for consultation in case management of diets or diseases in complicated cases.
 - a. Studies professional journals and papers for new discoveries in diet and nutrition.
 - b. Makes public presentations and provides training at in-services.
4. Prepares records and charts nutritional care plans for clients to ensure their records are complete and information about the client is available.
5. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Provides work direction to Public Health Specialists (Community Health Nurses) and Nutrition Educators.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenges include providing appropriate nutrition intervention to clients with special needs. This is difficult because of the need to convince them of the need for a special diet and ensuring that they follow it.

Typical problems include diets not being followed, foods not being prepared according to prescribed recipes, clients deviating from prescribed diets, diets not being monitored properly, clients having a medical reaction to certain foods, people who do not understand program eligibility guidelines, seeing clients within the time allowed, maximizing productivity with workload, and changing eating behaviors of clients.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions include determining nutritional goals, dietary needs, and appropriate counseling for clients; determining the need to modify client care plans; appropriate documentation for client services; what technical information to provide to health care professionals; interpretation of policies, procedures, and regulations; nutrition education plans; special formula needs; and menus, snacks, and supplemental foods for clients.

Decisions referred include approval of special projects, unusual policies and procedures, program staff needs, purchase of equipment, in-service training provided to staff, and problems with diet orders.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with clients to provide counseling and develop or adjust special diets; other state agencies to coordinate services and make referrals; physicians, nursing, and direct care staff to discuss diets and make recommendations.

H. Working Conditions:

Located in a clinic setting and may travel to remote sites. May be exposed to various illnesses, lift and position clients for proper feeding, and lift boxes or equipment weighing fifty pounds or more.

I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- principles and practices of dietetics;
- food service management practices;
- health precautions in food preparation;
- food and nutrition sciences;
- providing services to clients in a public health setting.

Ability to:

- plan modified menus, recipes, and nutrition plans;
- counsel and instruct individuals on nutrition.

J. Licenses and Certification:

Possession of a Registered Dietitian or Licensed Nutritionist in the State of South Dakota in accordance with a South Dakota law.